

IN SUPPORT OF THE EPA RULE
CONCERNING TOTAL MAXIMUM
DAILY LOADS

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2000

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, the Environmental Protection Agency has taken a bold and necessary step toward fulfilling the promise of fishable, swimmable waters that the Congress made to the American people in the Clean Water Act nearly 30 years ago.

EPA has finalized the rule on Total Maximum Daily Loads. This will address the last frontier of the Clean Water Act—discharges from open spaces, runoff from land that gets into our waters through creeks and streams, into rivers, lakes, and estuaries.

EPA proceeded in all proper fashion in developing this rule. It provided for an extended comment period, which was further extended by Congress for a full 5 months. EPA subsequently received and responded to over 30,000 comments. The agency made changes in the rule to make it more flexible, more responsive, and more effective in addressing water quality needs. EPA even went as far as to withdraw the proposal for forestry, choosing to focus efforts on comprehensively, effectively, and thoroughly addressing the fundamental issue of runoff from nonpoint sources.

Notwithstanding this monumental effort, Congress responded with a direct assault on TMDL rule and the Clean Water Act.

Regrettably, it seems as though we go down this road every year—EPA seeking to advance protection of human health and the environment, and the Congress pushing anti-environmental riders in appropriations bills.

Just a few short weeks ago, the majority, with much fanfare, claimed to have adopted a policy of no anti-environmental riders in appropriations bills. Unfortunately, that policy lasted only until the first vote on a conference report, when the majority inserted language to prevent EPA from improving the quality of the Nation's waters. The majority's rider would prevent EPA from proceeding with the TMDL rule by prohibiting the agency from spending any money to advance the process of developing and implementing the program.

The opposition to the TMDL rule is badly misguided and fueled by an unwillingness to achieve water quality in a fair and timely manner. The TMDL process is an effective, rational, and defensible process by which to achieve the water quality goals of the Clean Water Act.

The EPA estimates that some 20,000 rivers, lakes, streams and other bodies of water in this country are polluted to the point of endangering public health. The TMDL rule would help states address this problem by setting a daily limit on the amount of polluting substances entering these waters, in effect, creating a "pollution budget" for them.

This is how the process works: First, states identify those waters where the state's water quality standards are not being met.

Second, states identify the pollutants that are causing the water quality impairment.

Third, states identify the sources of those pollutants.

Finally, states assign responsibility for reducing those pollutants so that the waters can meet the uses that the states have established.

We have made great improvements in water quality through the treatment of municipal waste and industrial discharges. Thanks to billions of dollars invested by industries and municipalities, these point sources are no longer the greatest source of water quality impairment. Nationally, the greatest remaining problem is nonpoint sources—not pollution from a single, easily identifiable source such as discharge from a sewer pipe, but from a wider area, such as runoff from a farm field or parking lot. Now, nearly 30 years after the Clean Water Act, it is time for the states to get all sources of pollution—including nonpoint sources—to be part of the solution.

I have heard the arguments that the TMDL rule is not based on science. In my considered judgment, the TMDL rule is not only based on science, it is based upon the facts.

Just this June, EPA published its biennial report entitled National Water Quality. This report provides Congress with information developed by the states, and the states tell us that there are still major water quality problems to be addressed. Further, the states tell Congress that for rivers, streams, lakes, reservoirs and ponds, the leading source of water quality impairment, by far, is runoff from urban lands under development and from those agricultural lands that are not properly managed to contain runoff.

The TMDL process is the most fair and efficient way to finish cleaning up the Nation's waters. The TMDL rule is not perfect, and EPA has been responsive in making adjustments to the rule. Many have criticized it, including some in the environmental community, but the TMDL process is the tool the states need to achieve water quality.

EPA has changed the TMDL rule to make it clearer and more responsive to the concerns of the agriculture community. EPA has also withdrawn in its entirety the rule relating to forestry, and has promised to work with stakeholders to develop a new rule sometime next year.

Now, the vast majority of the environmental community supports going forward. The Department of Agriculture supports going forward.

I applaud EPA for going forward, and will work to allow EPA to fully implement the rule and achieve the water quality goals of the landmark Clean Water Act of 1972.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT
FINANCING, AND RELATED PRO-
GRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT,
2001

SPEECH OF

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4811) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the Lee amendment.

This amendment will provide the funds needed for finding a cure for HIV/AIDS.

Sadly, HIV/AIDS infects more than ten million young people around the world, making it the largest crisis children face.

Just as awful, this horrific virus has left millions of uninfected children orphaned by parents who have died of HIV/AIDS.

AIDS is destroying the lives and futures of our children here at home, and our children around the globe, and we are not doing enough to turn the tide.

What kind of crisis does it take before this Congress realizes we need to take immediate action against the global AIDS epidemic?

Immediate action requires measures of prevention and treatment.

Prevention must include world-wide educational and awareness campaigns. Our youth can't protect themselves if they don't know the facts about HIV/AIDS. I find it extremely disturbing that many children don't know how the virus is transmitted.

Like prevention, we must make treatment for AIDS a high priority.

The availability of certain drugs can make the difference between the death of a parent, child or individual and the possibility of a bright, healthy future.

Mr. Chairman, we need to mobilize every available resource, sparing no effort to fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Our Nation and those across the globe need help and they need it now.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT
FINANCING, AND RELATED PRO-
GRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT,
2001

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4811) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I join with my colleagues from Vermont, New Jersey, and New York in support of women and children around the world and rise in strong support of the Sanders/Smith/Slaughter/Maloney amendment.

This amendment increases USAID's Development Assistance Account by \$2.5 million dollars to assist non-governmental organizations in providing shelter and reintegration assistance to the millions of women and children who are victims of international trafficking.

The exploitation of our world's women and children in trafficking is a tragic human rights offense.

Many of these women and children are kidnapped, sold, or tricked into captivity. Instead of dreams of better jobs, better lives, they are trapped into a monstrous ordeal of coercion, violence, and disease. It is important that we protect and assist the victims of trafficking once they are rescued from their nightmare.

Shelters are needed so that victims have a temporary and safe place to stay, and where they can obtain medical services.